Lostine Corridor Public Safety Project
WILDLIFE

Introduction

Suitable habitat to support Region – 6 Sensitive wildlife species, neotropical migratory birds (NTMB), old growth/LOS associated species, snag and down wood associated species, and management indicator species (MIS) exists within the proposed project area. This project will have no effect on any threatened or endangered wildlife species and will not result in moving any sensitive species towards federal listing. The Lostine Corridor Safety Project will contribute to the viability of the species associated with habitat dominated by mixed conifer forest made up of ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, western larch, lodgepole pine, Engelmann spruce and some sub-alpine fir.

This report has two primary purposes:

1. To disclose the effects of the proposed action to wildlife species that are federally listed threatened or endangered, on the Region 6 sensitive list, management indicator species for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, and wildlife species of interest.
2. To determine whether the proposed actions are consistent with Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Plan direction and the Lostine River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan.

Proposed Action

The primary purpose and need of this project is to address the public safety issues in the corridor. Secondly, the project will address risks to the other values in the corridor including infrastructure (homes, cabins, recreation improvements, roads), the natural resource values. To reduce risks to these values the Forest Service is proposing the following within the project area boundary (approx. 2,110 acres):

- Removing hazard trees along travel routes and adjacent to residential, recreation, historic and improvements (addressing immediate hazards to people and infrastructure).
- Thinning stand densities to decrease severity of wildfire and to improve forest resiliency (addressing both risks to ingress and egress in the corridor in the event of wildfire, and risk of insect and disease impacts over the long term).
- Removing fuels (surface fuels, ladder fuels, and small woody debris) throughout the corridor, particularly in the wildland urban interface.
- Creating small (less than 2 acre) gaps/openings in lodge pole stands to break up continuous fuels so fire could be managed more effectively.

The project will also assess opportunities to provide wood products for local markets, including firewood, through implementation.

Analysis Framework and Direction

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Plan (1990)

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) provides standards and guidelines to protect and enhance habitat for existing native and desired non-native vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife species. Applicable direction includes management guidelines for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, snag management, dead and down material, raptor nest sites, and pileated woodpecker feeding areas. (Forest Plan 4-24, 4-44 — 4-46, 4-51-52, 4-71, 4-79).

Lostine River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (1993)

The Lostine River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (River Plan) established the goals for 11 miles of the Lostine River designed as a 'recreational' river. For Wildlife this goal is to provide *"quality habitat that is maintained or increased for all wildlife species with no reduction in Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive (PETS) wildlife species habitat or populations"* (Lostine River Plan pg. 6).

Existing Condition

Federally Listed Threatened or Endangered Species

No federally listed threatened or endangered species, designated critical habitat, species proposed for listing or proposed critical habitat is known to be within or occupy the project area. Therefore, the determination is '**No Effect**'.

Region 6 Sensitive Species

Table 1 displays Region 6 Forest Service sensitive wildlife species that either utilize habitats found within the project area, have been documented in the project area, or have been documented on the Wallowa Whitman National Forest.

Table 1, Region 6 Sensitive Species within known sightings, habitat, or known to be within the WWNF and their effects determination from the proposed action.

Species	Preferred Habitat	Type Habitat Area Provides	Nest/Den Habitats	Prey/Forage Habitat	Occurrence	Effects or Impacts[1]
Regional 6 Sensitive Species						
Lewis woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*	Open woodland near water. Ponderosa pine and riparian cottonwood communities.	Open woodland near water. Ponderosa pine and riparian cottonwood communities.	Existing nest cavities excavated by other woodpeckers in large-diameter dead or dying trees.	Insects during spring and summer. Fruits, nuts, grains, and acorns during fall and winter.	Occurs in Wallowa County spring and summer during breeding season. Recorded sightings in analysis area.	MIIH
Pacific Fisher *Pekania pennanti*	Forested areas with streams, marshes and openings.	Forested area with streams and openings.	Tree cavity preferred but will also use hollow log or cavity in a rock out cropping.	Small mammals, carrion, birds, amphibians, and occasionally berries and vegetation. Prey	Suspected on WWNF and in the Lostine Corridor.	MIIH

Species	Preferred Habitat	Type Habitat Area Provides	Nest/Den Habitats	Prey/Forage Habitat	Occurrence	Effects or Impacts[1]
				and habitat exist throughout analysis area.		
North American wolverine *Gulo gulo luteus*	Open meadows, cliffs, talus slopes and subalpine forests.	Open meadows, old growth, and cliffs.	Boulder fields and talus slopes.	Small mammals, birds, and carrion. Prey and habitat exist throughout analysis area.	Documented on WWNF and in analysis area.	NI
Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*	Habitat Generalists	Available	Dens in hill sides, rock outcroppings, under large tree roots	Ungulates, rodents, rabbits, skunks, beaver, grouse, fish, porcupines, birds, coyotes, nuts, berries, and insects.	No known wolf pack territory. Between Imnaha and Minam wolf packs territories. Members of both packs visit area.	NI
Townsend's big-eared bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*	Variety of habitats most common is desert shrub, pinion-juniper and pine forest.	Pine Forest	Caves and abandoned mines	Insects	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Spotted Bat *Euderma maculatum*	Desert, cliffs with crevices, low vegetation or openings in forests close to water	Openings in Forests close to water	Caves and abandoned mines	Insects and spiders	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Fringed myotis *Myotis thysanodes*	Caves, abandoned mines, and diverse vegetative habitat	Diverse vegetative habitat	Caves and abandoned mines surrounded by vegetation	Insects and spiders	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Columbia Spotted Frog (C) *Rana luteiventris*	Cold slow moving streams with oxbows, springs or marshes, ponds and small lakes	Cold slow moving streams with oxbows and springs, and ponds.	Surface water of Cold slow moving streams with oxbows, springs or marshes, ponds and small lakes.	Invertebrates: ants, beetles, mosquito larvae, grasshoppers, spiders, mollusks, tadpoles, and slugs.	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog *Ascaphus montanus*	Cold rocky fast-flowing permanent mountain streams.	Cold rocky fast-flowing permanent mountain streams.	Eggs and larvae are attached to the underside rocks downstream.	Spiders, insects, snails, ticks, mites, and crickets. Tadpoles feed on diatoms, desmids, filamentous algae, and pollen.	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI

Species	Preferred Habitat	Type Habitat Area Provides	Nest/Den Habitats	Prey/Forage Habitat	Occurrence	Effects or Impacts[1]
Northern bald eagle *Haliaetus leucocephalus*	Mature stands of trees near large bodies of water.	Mature stands of trees but not near large bodies of water only creeks.	Cliffs or large trees within a kilometer of water (lakes or rivers).	Fish, small mammals and birds, and carrion.	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*	Fast flowing rivers and streams in mountains	Rivers and streams	On ground at base of shrub or tree, under fallen logs, close to edge of bank, small cliffs, tree cavities and stumps.	Aquatic insects and fish roe	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
White-headed woodpecker *Picoides albolarvatus*	Old growth, open large PIPO, mixed conifer by PIPO.	Old growth, open large PIPO, mixed conifer by PIPO.	In openings with snags, stumps, crown cover ≈ 12 %, leaning logs often < 3m from ground.	Seeds especially pine seeds, invertebrates, and sap.	Documented on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Pine grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator*	Open coniferous forests near treeline and montane meadows.	Open coniferous forests near treeline and montane meadows.	Dense foliage of trees 2-4 m above ground	Buds, newly grown needles, fly-catching, unripe seed and ovaries of forbs.	Documented on the WWNF. Sighting in 2005 in project area.	NI
Broad-tailed hummingbird *Selasphorus platycercus*	Mountain canyons with riparian vegetation and subalpine meadows.	Mountain canyons with riparian vegetation and subalpine meadows.	Tree branch behind overhanging branch. 1-5 feet above the ground.	Nectar and small insects.	Suspected on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Bumblebee, Butterflies and Land Snails						
Western bumblebee *Bombus occidentalis*	Habitat generalist	Habitat throughout the project area	Colony with queen	Generalist forages on a variety of flowers	Documented on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	MIIH
Johnson's Hairstreak *Callophrys johnsoni*	Old growth and LOS conifer forests in dwarf mistletoe in the forest canopy at elevations > 2000 feet.	Old growth and LOS conifer forests in dwarf mistletoe in the forest canopy at elevations > 2000 feet.	Females lay eggs on the host plant (conifer mistletoe).	Larvae feed on exposed parts of conifer mistletoe. Adults feed on flower nectar that includes: Pacific dogwood, ceanothus, Pussy paws, and *Rubus spp*., and visit muddy areas for moisture.	Documented on WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	MIIH

Species	Preferred Habitat	Type Habitat Area Provides	Nest/Den Habitats	Prey/Forage Habitat	Occurrence	Effects or Impacts[1]
Intermountain skipper *Colias christina pseudochristina*	Open woodland, meadows, roadsides and open forests.	Steep sunny slopes between forest and shrubsteepe or grasslands	Eggs laid singly on leaves of peavine species	Peavine species as larvae and a variety of plants as adults.	Documented on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	MIIH
Silver-bordered fritillary *Boloria selene*	Wet meadows, bogs and marshes. Riparian areas.	Riparian areas.	Female lays eggs near host violet species.	Larval host plants: Northern bog violet and Pioneer violet. Adults' nectar from composite flowers; golden rod and black eyed Susan.	Documented on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Yuma skipper *Ochlodes yuma*	Beds of giant reeds near fresh water marshes, streams, ponds, seeps, sloughs, springs and canals.	Riparian areas, rivers and streams	Female lays eggs on or near reed species.	Reed species	Documented on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI
Fir Pinwheel *Radiodiscus abietum*	Moist, rocky forested terrain, at medium-high elevations with Douglas-fir trees as the dominant species with an understory that includes many forbs, deciduous shrubs, or talus sites on a low slope near permanent water.	Moist, rocky forested terrain, at medium-high elevations with Douglas-fir trees as the dominant species.	Moist, rocky forested terrain, at medium-high elevations with Douglas-fir trees as the dominant species.	Douglas-fir trees as the dominant species with an understory that includes many forbs, and deciduous shrubs.	Documented on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in project area.	NI
Shiny tightcoil *Pristiloma wascoense*	Moist surfaces of wood, green and decaying vegetation and rocks.	Moist surfaces of wood, green and decaying vegetation and rocks.	Moist surfaces of wood, green and decaying vegetation and rocks.	Graze on bacteria, fungi, yeasts and other microscopic organisms	Suspected on the WWNF. No recorded sightings in analysis area.	NI

MIIH = May Impact Individuals or Habitat, but will not likely contribute to a trend towards federal listing or cause a loss of viability to the populations or species. NI = No Impact

Management Indicator Species

There are four management indicator species (MIS) identified in the Forest Plan, American marten, northern goshawk, pileated woodpecker, Rocky Mountain elk, and one group of species, primary cavity excavators. These species serve as indicators of the effects of management activities by representing a broad range of other wildlife species. Management indicator species are indicators of the quality and distribution of the type of habitat, viable populations, and adequate habitat also provided for other species that share similar habitat requirements. Table 2 displays the management indicator species of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest that are

found within the project area, have been documented in the project area, or have been documented on the Wallowa Whitman National Forest.

Table 2. Management indicator species documented in the analysis area.

Species*	Preferred Habitat	Type Habitat Area Provides	Nest/Den Habitats	Prey/Forage Habitats	Occurrence
American marten *Martes americana*	Unharvested, late-successional (grand fir, subalpine fir, and Engelmann spruce) or forests near a water source(springs and streams)	Potential and source habitat in southern end portion of project area	Trees with platforms, brooms, or cavities; subnivean[3] areas; hollow logs or slash piles; underground; rocks.	Slash piles; subnivean[1] areas; mistletoe; brooms; downed wood	Documented sightings in analysis area.
Northern Goshawk *Accipitor gentillis*	Mature and old growth forests	Mature and old growth forests	Multilayered canopy old growth, near water source, and on a moderate slope	Small birds and mammals	Documented sightings in analysis area.
Pileated Woodpecker *Dryocopus pileatus*	Mature and old growth forests	Mature and old growth forests	Snags	Snags and insect infested trees and logs	Documented sightings in analysis area.
Rocky Mountain Elk *Cervus elaphus nelsoni*	Habitat generalists	Timber Stringers with mature stands mixed with young stands and meadows, grasslands, shrublands and rockylands.	High grass, down logs, structure near the ground to hide young	Shrubs, forbs, grasses, bark, leaves and lichens	Documented sightings in analysis area.
Primary cavity excavators[2]	Snags and logs ≥20 inches in a variety of species and habitats.	Open meadows to mature and old growth habitats with logs and snags.	Variety of snag species and sizes ≥ 12 inches in LOS and old growth.	Seeds, insects and insect infested wood.	Documented sightings in analysis area.

Species of Interest

Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis canadensis*). The Lostine Bighorn Sheep herd inhabits the Lostine Corridor Public Safety project area. This herd is part of a meta-population in the Hells Canyon/Snake River area that includes 15 other herds. All these herds interact between each other (Hells Canyon Initiative 2007). In 2015 the number of individuals in the Lostine Bighorn Sheep herd was approximately 85 (Penninger, 2015).

Environmental Consequences

Effects

There will be short-term direct effects as a result of the project activities, mostly caused by the machinery. Indirect effects are expected to be beneficial due to the decrease of down woody material. This treatment will provide enhanced wildlife habitat for both prey and predators that utilize mature open stands.

Opening up the canopy and allowing increased light to the forest floor will increase understory shrubs, forbs and grasses providing nesting, roosting and prey habitat for NTMBs, Lewis' woodpeckers, bumblebees, butterflies, terrestrial snail species, MIS, and other wildlife species. Treating the project areas will reduce the amount of fuel slash deposited on the ground and when treated in conjunction with fuel treatment objectives, reduce the chances of soil sterilization in the event of catastrophic fire. This project will help ensure future large diameter overstory trees will occupy these sites and eventually large snags for improved wildlife habitat.

Federally Listed Threatened or Endangered Species

There will be no effects to any federally listed threatened or endangered species, designated critical habitat, species proposed for listing or proposed critical habitat, since non exist within the project area.

Region 6 Sensitive Species

There may be effects to individual or habitats for some R-6 sensitive wildlife species. Table 1 indicates which species may be affected and which will not be affected by the proposed actions. Individuals may be crushed or trampled and some habitat will be altered. None of the proposed actions will move any R-6 sensitive species toward federal listing.

Management Indicator Species

The actions proposed may affect individuals or habitat but will continue to maintain viable populations of these species within the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

Effects anticipated from the activities proposed will maintain a viable population of the existing species within the planning area. Treatment units were designed to avoid an identified goshawk nest.

If other nests site are found during implementation activities would cease and resume after the fledgling period ends. Seasonal restrictions of harvest activities are required within ½ mile of the nest during the nesting season from March 1 through August 30 for goshawk. This restriction should be extended to not later than 30 days if monitoring indicate that fledglings are still present in the nest stand after the ending date for each species.

Species of Interest

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep usually avoid forested stands so there would not be any impacts to Bighorn Sheep.

Cumulative Effects

The proposed action in combination with past projects will have no anticipated adverse cumulative effects. This proposed project would not change the distribution or abundance of wildlife species.

Consistencies

Based on the information documented in this report, the proposed actions under the Lostine Project are found to be consistent with Forest Plan as amended by the Lostine Wild and Scenic River Plan.